

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) reacted today to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit Panel's unpublished ruling that it would dismiss the petitions by Delaware County and others who argued that the Court should block the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) airspace redesign project.

"I am disappointed but undeterred by yesterday's unpublished decision to dismiss petitions by Delaware County and eleven other parties, which demonstrated violations of federal law in the implementation of an airspace redesign that is not only harmful to the environment, but also negatively impacts the health and education of children," said Congressman Sestak. "I agree with Attorney General Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut who has indicated he will immediately seek a rehearing. As he correctly states, this decision disregards essential legal issues, as well as the impact of increased noise and pollution on millions of residents and state parks. I applaud his determination to continue this fight. The FAA must be held accountable for its failure to consider the impact of increased noise on residents throughout the northeastern United States. There are less damaging alternatives that must be taken into account.

"I encourage the parties to consider requesting that the case be heard before the entire Circuit and not rule out the possibility of bringing it before the U.S. Supreme Court as part of a multifaceted strategy of ending this dangerous, costly and ineffective method of addressing flight delays. Most importantly this strategy must include Tinicum Township and Delaware County refusing to sell land to Philadelphia for the construction of a new runway that would devastate Tinicum. The FAA has confirmed that a multi-billion dollar capacity enhancement at PHL is a necessary companion to its airspace redesign, but is planning to go forward without considering better alternatives to reduce flight delays. I continue to support efforts, such as using regional airports and other infrastructure projects including highway, rail and seaport improvements, which will provide jobs, a stronger economy and a more efficient transportation system for our region."

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.*

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